



Tulsa's Bertoia Fountain to get restoration and a new home at Central Library

By Michael Overall Tulsa World 15 hrs ago 1



The Bertoia Fountain at the sunken Center Plaza near Fourth and Main streets is going to be moved Library. Tulsa World file



Designed by a world-famous artist but often overlooked in a nearly deserted downtown plaza, Tulsa's Bertoia Fountain will move to the Central Library before its existing location is demolished, officials told the Tulsa World on Tuesday.

Originally installed in 1959 at the First National Auto Bank, which is now home to The Vault restaurant, the 15-foot-tall impressionistic fountain has stood for most of its history in a sunken plaza at Fourth and Main streets, where it has fallen into disrepair and no longer has any water. City officials issued a building permit in December to replace the sunken garden with a five-story, \$12.8 million parking garage, leaving preservationists worried about the fountain's fate.

Rex Brown, a former trustee for the Tulsa Foundation for Architecture, [once quipped](#) that the Bertoia is "the coolest piece of art that nobody knows about in Tulsa."

But its new home might offer the fountain a much higher profile. Developer Stuart Price will donate the Bertoia to the Tulsa City-County Library system, which plans to do some restoration work on the fountain before displaying it at the newly renovated downtown library at Fifth Street and Denver Avenue, officials said.



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Harry Bertoia, who died in 1978, has artwork on prominent display at libraries in Dallas and Omaha, Nebraska, as well as in museums around the world.

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Architecture Foundation welcomes move

Regularly featuring it on Second Saturday architecture tours, the Tulsa Foundation for Architecture spent years advocating for the restoration and relocation of the Bertoia fountain.

It was Executive Director Amanda DeCort who, after hearing about plans to turn the fountain's current location into a parking garage, put the current owner in touch with the Central Library.

"Fortunately, the library's art committee was eager and the owner of the sculpture was willing," DeCort said. "We need to give the library some kudos. Restoring the fountain will be no small feat."



Staff Writer Michael Overall

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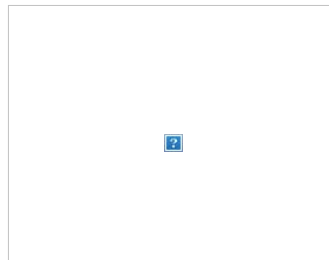


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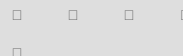
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